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Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 04837 291201Z
ACTION SS-25

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----------088167 291220Z /11
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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
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S E C R E T JIDDA 4837

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, MASS, YE, YS, SA
SUBJ: TWINAM BRIEFING OF SAG OFFICIALS ON MISSION TO SANA

REF: JIDDA 4834

1. DURING MEETING TODAY JUNE 29 WITH SAUDI DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER THUNAYYAN AND SAG MFA PENINSULAR AFFAIRS DIRECTOR AL-SHURA, AMBASSADORS WEST AND TWINAM DISCUSSED THE TWINAM MISSION TO SANA. POL OFFICER LEWIS WAS NOTETAKER.

2. TWINAM, MAKING POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL, SAID THAT THE YAR LEADERS HE MET WITH "GREATLY APPRECIATED" PRESIDENT CARTER'S MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND TWINAM'S VISIT TO SANA TO DELIVER IT. TWINAM SAID THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP WILL BE LEANING HEAVILY ON SAUDI ARABIA FOR SUPPORT AND THAT HE HAD TAKEN LIBERTY OF MENTIONING TO THEM THE WARMTH AND CONCERN WHICH PRINCE TURKI AL FEISAL HAD VONVEYED IN DISCUSSING YAR STIUATION JUNE 25 (JIDDA 4704), WITH YAR LEADERS TAKING GREAT COMFOR IN THIS.

3. TWINAM SAID THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP APPEARED UNEASY ABOUT THE FUTURE BUT WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO EXPRESS DETERMINATION TO PERSEVERE IN KEEPING YAR ON STEADY
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COURSE. TWINAM SAID THAT HE FELT THAT YAR LEADERS HAD STRESSED NEED FOR CONCRETE MANIFESTATIONS OF U.S.-SAUDI SUPPORT AND THAT JOINT SAUDI-YR MILITARY PROGRAMS MIGHT BE IMPLEMENTED MORE QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO MEET THIS FELT NEED. TWINAM NOTED IMPORTANCE OF AT LEAST GIVING APPEARANCE OF MOVING FORWARD IN THIS AREA SO THAT NORTH YEMEN COULD PROJECT THE IMAGE OF

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BEING ABLE TO DEFEND ITSELF.

4. HE SAID THAT YEMENI LEADERS APPEAR TO BE UNHAPPY WITH THE SOVIET ROLE IN THE YAR BUT BECAUSE THEY STILL HAVE SOVIET EQUIPMENT IN THEIR ARMED FORCES, THEY RECOGNIZE THEY ARE STILL DEPENDENT ON SOVIET SUPPORT.

5. TWINAM SAID THAT YAR PRESIDENT HAD SAID THERE IS NO NEED TO DISCUSS SPECIFICS IN THE AREA OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE BECAUSE "WE NEED EVERYTHING." TWINAM WENT ON TO SAY THAT IN COUNTRY LIKE YAR EVEN A LITTLE HELP WOULD MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN PRLJECTING A POSITIVE IMAGE.

6. THUNAYYAN SAID THAT THERE IS SOME QUESTION ABOUT THE YEMENI CAPACITY TO ABSORB THE NEW MILITARY EQUIP-MENT. HE SAID THAT THERE ARE SO MANY BASIC INFRA-STRUCTURAL NEEDS LIKE ROADS WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE LOGISITIC CAPABILITY ESSENTIAL TO CREATE CREDIBLE YAR DEFENSE.

7. THUNAYYAN SAID HAT IN MANY AREAS YEMEN IS STILL "PRIMITIVE" AND THAT YEMEN HAS HAD AT LEAST 30 YEARS OF TURMOIL. THUNAYYAN EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT IN SOUTH YEMEN. HE SAID THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP IS APPARENTLY PREOCCUPIED WITH

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CONSOLIDATING ITSELF AND DOUBTED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY OVERT MOVES AGAINST NORTH YEMEN IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT THE GREATEST DANGER TO NORTH YEMEN WOULD BE SUBVERSION AND PERHAPS MORE TERRORISM BY LEADERS IN SOUTH YEMEN.

8. THUNAYYAN THANKED AMBASSADORS WEST AND TWINAM FOR BRIEFING HIM ON THE RESULTS OF HIS TRIP TO SANA AND SAID THAT IT WAS EVIDENCE OF THE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THESE MATTERS.
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